

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. Although we certainly have not agreed on many policy issues and priorities over the years, I have greatly appreciated working alongside Senator ENZI to fund and define many other legislative priorities to meet the needs of the American people.

I will miss my fellow Italian-Irish friend. We were a proud caucus of the only two Irish-Italian American Senators. Upon his retirement from the Senate, I would like to thank Senator ENZI for his service, and Marcelle and I wish MIKE and his wife Diana all the best.

TRIBUTE TO TOM UDALL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, there are some for whom public service simply isn't a choice; it runs through their veins as a calling and a force that draws them to answer an undeniable call. TOM UDALL is one of those people, and when the curtain closes on this 116th Congress and on TOM's service in the Senate, it will bookend a career in Congress in which the Udalls, a family steeped in public service, can take great pride. The UDALL legacy will live on in its benefits for generations of Americans to come.

First as a Representative to the U.S. House and later as a U.S. Senator, TOM has consistently fought for the interests of New Mexico and his State's people. He has been instrumental in the passage of legislation that has not only brought important resources to the people of New Mexico, but has protected and preserved our environment. For his constituents at home, this has meant more conservation of public lands and significant expansions of access to education, healthcare, and land tenure rights for Native Americans in New Mexico and across the United States.

TOM fought hard to protect the environment and invest in a more sustainable future. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and as the ranking member of the Interior and Environment Subcommittee, he advocated strongly for continued financial assistance for Federal, State, and local programs that focus on environmental conservation and work to address climate change and its effects. Critically, he fought against draconian budget cuts to such entities as the Environmental Protection Agency and fought to protect our clean air and clean drinking water laws. Working with TOM on the Appropriations Committee, it has been easy to see his clear dedication to his constituents, and his devoted service to country.

I was saddened when TOM announced his retirement, but I believe TOM will never close the door on his public service. Marcelle and I wish TOM and his wife Jill, and the rest of their family, all the best in the coming years. It was a privilege to be on the floor of the Senate when TOM gave his farewell ad-

dress. Such honesty, patriotism, wisdom of how we can and must restore the workings of the Senate—all current Senators and future Senators should listen.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN LATINO ACT

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise to engage in a colloquy with the distinguished chairman of the Senate Rules Committee and the senior Senator from Texas with regard to a commitment made between all of us here.

This commitment is related to the [consideration] of H.R. 2420, National Museum of the American Latino Act, previously reported out of the Rules Committee on December 3, and championed by Senator CORNYN.

As chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and having spearheaded the effort to design and build the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial, I appreciate the goal of this legislation, but also the challenges getting the effort across the goal line.

H.R. 2420 has an honorable cause: to build a museum that focuses on the legacy of the Latino people, one that is embedded in the history of the United States. The purpose of the National Museum of the American Latino is to serve as the premier location for people to learn about Latino contributions to life, art, history, and culture in the United States.

I support such an effort. However, I raise one issue with the legislation, that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's historic main headquarters building is specified in the bill as a potential location for the museum.

USDA has been headquartered at the location on the National Mall since 1868. The main building was renamed in 1995 in honor of one of the longest serving members of Congress, Jaime L. Whitten of Mississippi. I had the pleasure to serve with Chairman Whitten in the House.

USDA provides leadership on issues related to food, agriculture, rural development, and nutrition. The work of the Department benefits residents in our rural communities and supports agriculture production that feeds hundreds of millions of Americans and others throughout the world.

The legacy of the Latino people is intertwined with the communities that USDA serves in rural and urban America.

I appreciate the efforts of the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of the American Latino. Having recently completed the decades-long endeavor to establish Ike's memorial, I am sympathetic to the desire to establish a tribute in our Nation's Capitol. It is not an easy process, and there will undoubtedly be challenges along the way.

Attempting to relocate the historic headquarters of one of the largest Federal agencies which serves all Americans is a hurdle that can be avoided.

So I encourage the board of trustees of the National Museum of the American Latino and the board of regents of the Smithsonian Institution, who are responsible for choosing the site location of the museum, to work through their processes as they finalize a location. And as they do so, I encourage them to appreciate USDA's mission and constituency when they make hard decisions and consider the expense of relocating USDA.

I am pleased that we have come to a compact with regard to the location for this museum, that we agree here to encourage the board of trustees and the board regents to break ground on a fresh location, rather than a historic site of a Department that has served and will continue to serve our Nation's farmers, ranchers, growers, and other rural stakeholders.

I now yield to my friend, Mr. BLUNT, the senior Senator from Missouri and chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, to offer his perspective.

Mr. BLUNT. Thank you, Chairman ROBERTS. I was pleased the Rules Committee favorably approved H.R. 2420, the National Museum of the American Latino Act, earlier this month.

There is no doubt the stories of the American Latino are important and must be told more fully than they have been in the past. I want to commend Senators CORNYN and MENENDEZ on their diligent efforts to get here. I know it has been a long road.

In order to keep this legislation moving forward, I agree with Chairman ROBERTS on the need to state for the record the importance of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's historic main headquarters.

While that building is listed in the bill as a potential location for the museum, the Senate recognizes the extreme imposition this would place on the Department and the people it serves.

As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee for Agriculture—and that subcommittee's former ranking member—I couldn't agree more with Chairman ROBERTS that the work of the USDA is crucially important to Missouri, to Kansas, to the Nation, and the international community as well. Clearly, that work would be disrupted if the USDA and its staff were forced to relocate.

I join Chairman ROBERTS in encouraging the Smithsonian's board of regents to recognize the role and expanse of the USDA when selecting a location for the museum and to look for a more appropriate site for the museum.

I now yield to the Senior Senator from Texas, an early champion of this legislation, for his remarks.

Mr. CORNYN. Thank you to the senior Senator from Kansas for his leadership over the years and his attention to this bill. I also thank the chairman for holding a hearing and passing this important bill out of his committee.

I know some of our colleagues have concerns about the museum location,